

said solenoid; and

I¹
a buffer portion damping a change of fuel pressure caused by valve bounce when the needle is closed, said buffer portion being an elastic member disposed at a position at which said buffer portion faces and contacts a fuel passage located at an upstream side with respect to an end face of said armature located on a side of a nozzle opening side,

wherein said elastic member is provided between a sleeve and said core in order to form said buffer portion, said sleeve being disposed between a core and a valve holder of the solenoid, said elastic member being attached to a portion of said sleeve located near an end portion of a coil, said end portion of said coil being the end portion nearest to said needle valve, and said elastic member extending in a perpendicular direction away from said sleeve toward said core.

Sub J1
I²
6. (Four-times Amended) A fuel injection valve for opening and closing a needle valve by driving an armature with a solenoid, said fuel injection valve comprising:

said needle valve;

said armature;

said solenoid; and

a buffer portion damping a change of fuel pressure caused by valve bounce when the needle is closed, said buffer portion being an elastic member disposed at a position at which said buffer portion faces and contacts a fuel passage located at an upstream side with respect to an end face of said armature located on a side of a nozzle opening side,

wherein substantially all of said buffer portion contacts fuel in said fuel passage.

7. (Four-times Amended) A fuel injection valve for opening and closing a needle valve by driving an armature with a solenoid, said fuel injection valve comprising:

I²
said needle valve;

said armature;

said solenoid; and

a buffer portion damping a change of fuel pressure caused by valve bounce when the needle is closed, said buffer portion being an elastic member disposed at a position at which said buffer portion faces and contacts a fuel passage located at an upstream side with respect to an end face on a nozzle opening side of said armature,

wherein substantially all of said buffer portion contacts fuel in said fuel passage.

Subj
8. (Twice Amended) A fuel injection valve for opening and closing a needle valve by driving an armature with a solenoid, said fuel injection valve comprising:

I³
said needle valve;

said armature;

said solenoid; and

means for damping a change of fuel pressure caused by valve bounce when the needle is closed, said means being an elastic member disposed at a position at which said means

faces and contacts a fuel passage located at an upstream side with respect to an end face of said armature located on a side of a nozzle opening side.

9. (Twice Amended) A fuel injection valve for opening and closing a needle valve by driving an armature with a solenoid, said fuel injection valve comprising:

13
said needle valve;

said armature;

said solenoid; and

means for damping a change of fuel pressure caused by valve bounce when the needle is closed, said means being an elastic member disposed at a position at which said means faces and contacts a fuel passage located at an upstream side with respect to an end face on a nozzle opening side of said armature.